

From: [Sierra Club Membership Services](#) on behalf of [Robert Cerello](#)
To: [Scoping_Delta_Plan@Delta_Council](#)
Subject: Delta Plan Scoping Comments
Date: Friday, January 21, 2011 6:00:54 PM

Jan 21, 2011

Chair Philip Isenberg
CA

Dear Chair Isenberg,

This is clearly and beyond argument an important moment for the Sacramento-San Joaquin Bay-Delta ecosystem and the Delta Stewardship Council. The Bay-Delta's ecosystem is described by reputable scientists as being in a state of ongoing collapse and there are concerns regarding the long-term physical stability of the Delta.

Those minds drafting a visionary and effective Delta Plan will require the careful consideration of a wide range of alternative actions, including significant new directions in water management.

The Council's members should clearly recognize that the Bay-Delta estuary is over-appropriated and that "ecosystem restoration" will require stronger flow standards and as well reductions in average annual diversions.

I recommend that the Council's minds use the following broad recommendations to guide the development of the draft Delta Plan and a draft EIR that analyzes a broad set of alternatives.

1. Guarantee Fresh Water to Support & Restore the Delta Ecosystem:

The Bay-Delta ecosystem is a national and statewide resource, and incidentally one critical to California's economic health, to the plants, animals, birds and fish that live here, and to the health of our citizens in contiguous communities.

2. Enforce Existing Water Pollution Control Laws: Commit to full implementation and enforcement of state and federal laws to protect both surface water and groundwater quality. The state's regulators are presently failing to meet existing standards drawn by men of conscience and responsibility to protect Bay-Delta surface water and groundwater quality; and they are lagging in the development of new standards and pollutant load regulations needed to ensure the health of the estuary's waters.

Contaminants such as salt, selenium, mercury, nutrients and pesticides pollute drinking water and damage the health of the Delta; and according to attested facts supplied by scientists, the damage is mounting every day.

3. Reducing Reliance on the Delta: Recognize that California has dramatic opportunities to invest in regional water supplies (e.g. agricultural and urban conservation, "waste water recycling", improved groundwater management and urban storm water capture) that can allow the state to meet its future needs, while simultaneously facilitating the restoration of the Delta irreparable and

massively-threatened ecosystem.

4. More Water Exports Should Not be Promised before Safe Limits are Established: Existing export of fresh water flows from the Bay-Delta estuary should be contingent on first ensuring sufficient water to support and restore the Bay-Delta ecosystem in perpetuity; and

5. Reduce Risks to people and property by determining a 'safe' yield for water exports: A "water grab" that allows more water exports from the Bay-Delta estuary, while ignoring the restraints of nature, and then expanding exports by promising unrealistically inflated quantities of water does not promote reliability. It promotes only conflict. Providing water to areas south of the Delta must be an action that first protects the habitat, local economies of the Sierra, Northern California, Delta and the San Joaquin River regions.

6. Enforce water rights: Don't allow politically-connected and powerful corporate interests to sell publicly-owned water supplies at a profit to them while at the same time badly damaging surrounding communities' citizens' lives and their water supplies.

7. Protect Taxpayers: Taxpayers and ratepayers must not be soaked again -- either through "bonds" nor direct payments for the costs of exporting this water. Any plan adopted to export water out of the Delta from the Northern California and Sierra watersheds, if any are approved in this time of scarcity, must be cost effective; and they must ensure that those exporting water from the Bay-Delta estuary can pay the mitigation costs, design, and capital costs.

Thank you for considering the above comments. I look forward to following the work of the Council as it develops the Delta Plan. Regulations are the basis of our Constitution, not "laws" that punish criminals. And here the regulations must as always be drawn by scientists, not politicians--since they impact the interaction of citizens and can harm or impoverish many lives if drawn unwisely or in favor of narrow groups hoping for an unearned windfall.

The Delta must be overseen with an eye toward perpetuity, not short-term "profiteering" by agents of illegal "interest" cabals. Thank you again for doing the job you were given powers to do.

Sincerely,

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